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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [UNSC](#) [BM](#)  
SUBJECT: BURMA STATE OF PLAY AT THE UN

REF: A. USUN 1151  
[1](#)B. USUN 1161

Classified By: Ambassador DiCarlo for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

P-3 Views on Arms Embargo

[1](#)1. (C) During a P-3 meeting with Ambassador DiCarlo on December 18, UK and French Permanent Representatives voiced strong concern about pressing for an arms embargo resolution in the Security Council. UK PR Sawers said an embargo would likely result in a double veto by Russia and China, which would push the issue out of the Council for months. He commented that such an approach would "not be the best way to forge policy," especially considering upcoming 2010 elections. (Note: In January 2007, China and Russia vetoed a resolution on Burma, which effectively pushed the issue off the Council's agenda until the riots in September 2007. Both Russia and China have not substantively changed their positions and would likely veto a resolution.) French PR Ripert also felt it would not be possible to get an arms embargo through the Council now, but offered a two-phased approach to a resolution that could neutralize a possible veto by the Russians and isolate the Chinese. He proposed sending a mission to Burma with conditions and incentives for the regime. Opining that the regime would not likely respond positively, Ripert said the Council could react with a resolution.

Gambari Returns to Burma?

[1](#)2. (C) Special Advisor Gambari's Assistant, Erwan Pouchous, confirmed to us that Gambari received a written invitation from the regime to return to Burma "at the end of January" during an informal discussion on December 18. According to Pouchous, Gambari is consulting with SYG Ban on the visit. Pouchous added that SYG Ban is considering a return trip to Burma, which would likely take place around the yet-to-be-scheduled ASEAN Summit. Gambari would prepare the way for this trip, Pouchous remarked. (Comment: This contradicts Ban's recent statement to the Ambassador (ref B) that he would not visit Burma again soon. End Comment.) Both French and UK PermReps told Ambassador DiCarlo they "don't give too much importance" to a Gambari visit to Burma and would not likely oppose it. UK PR Sawers felt there was "still mileage" in a return visit to Burma by SYG Ban.

Council Members on Burma

[1](#)3. (C) Among other Council members, Vietnam directly challenged the effectiveness of Council action during the recent Friends of Burma meeting and China stated that there is positive progress in Burma (ref A). Despite the fact that Russian PR Churkin had prepared remarks for the recent Friends meeting, he was the only ambassador who did not speak. The Russians are disengaging on the issue and they, like China, maintain that the situation does not constitute a threat to international peace and security, and consequently does not belong in the Council. Comments by Japan rejecting SYG Ban's proposed pause in the good offices mission reveal an increasingly cautious approach to Burma. In informal

discussions at the expert level, the Japanese told USUN they are "unsure" about Council action in January and the efficacy of any Council product at this time. Instead, they are looking toward 2010 elections as the next step.

Khalilzad